THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) Talcher-Bimlagarh(154kms) new line project was included in the Supplementary Budget 2003-04. Final Location Survey has been completed and land acquisition has been taken up. An outlay of Rs. 15 crore has been provided during 2007-08.

(b) No, Sir. The distance between Rourkela and Bhubaneswar will get reduced by about 100 kms.

(c) As per the information available, no such agitations have come to the notice of the Railways.

(d) No target date has been fixed. The work will be progressed and completed as per availability of resources.

Fire in "Palace on Wheels"

82. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether fire broke out in the engine of the 'Palace on Wheels'train at Delhi on\ the 3rd October, 2007;

(b) if so, whether the cause of fire has been inquired into, if so, the findings of the inquiry and the action taken thereon; and

(c) the loss of men and material suffered by the Railways as a result of this fire?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) In the incident under reference, steam and flames from the fire box of the steam engine of the 'Palace on Wheels' train entered the Driver's cab due to suspected malfunction of boiler component. The incident is being inquired into by the Commissioner of Railway Safety, Northern Circle.

(c) In this incident two railway employees lost their lives and three suffered injuries. The Loco has suffered minor damage in this mishap.

Vacancies in Railways

83. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of vacancies in Railways including technical level, zone-wise;

(b) the action taken to fill up the vacancies; and

(c) whether any survey has been conducted to find out the relationship between accidents and vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The approximate vacancies on zonal railways for Group 'C & 'D' as on 30.09.2007 are:

Central	12890	Eastern	13415
East Central	15401	East Coast	8438
Northern	17531	North Central	9310
North Eastern	3766	Northeast Frontier	11066